

Partnering to improve health for all.

Foundation *for* Healthy Communities

June 2020

Executive Director's Message

All of us at the Foundation for Healthy Communities want to extend our gratitude to the health care heroes on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. We are fortunate to work with many of these partners and have been inspired by their stories of dedication and compassion in this challenging environment. Additionally, we are grateful for the first responders, front line service employees, and all others who have helped provide the supports necessary for the health and well-being of the people of New Hampshire.

The Foundation, along with the New Hampshire Hospital Association, is supporting our health care systems in the response through the Granite State Health Care Coalition, which facilitates health care emergency preparedness activities across the state and has been actively involved in response activities.

While much attention is appropriately focused on the COVID-19 crisis, we are maintaining our focus on the goals of our programs and the people and partners they serve. We know that this pandemic and its economic toll will also cause a spike in other health issues, including mental health, substance use, and chronic disease management. The staff here at the Foundation are continuing to support our partners in this changed environment and adapting our activities to be responsive to the new challenges emerging as the pandemic continues to unfold.

Additionally, we want to express our solidarity with the black community and all those who are standing up against racism. It is well documented that racism contributes to poor health outcomes, and we believe that health equity is a key principle in all health improvement work.

We will continue to engage in the dialogue of how to address and undo systemic racism in our country so that all people have a fair opportunity to achieve their best health possible.

Be well and stay safe,

Peter



Peter Ames, MPH
Executive Director

**Granite State Health Care Coalition Supports New Hampshire with its
Statewide COVID-19 Emergency Response**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a volatile and unprecedented environment for all, with the entire health care continuum at the front lines responding to the crisis on behalf of their patients and communities they serve.

In collaboration with health care partners, local, state and federal officials, the Granite State Health Care Coalition (GSHCC) has played an integral role as direct support of the state's efforts to coordinate its statewide public health response to COVID-19 and address the short and long-term impact on the health care system and the residents of New Hampshire.

The GSHCC team has been actively working on healthcare preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery to COVID-19 through a number of activities, including:

- Conducting risk assessments with hospital emergency management coordinators and other healthcare leaders to identify current and future resource shortfalls;
- Processing and monitoring requests for personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Assisting with planning efforts for the establishment of Alternative Care Sites (ACS) to create additional surge bed capacity, if needed;
- Leading the establishment of multiple Self-Isolation/Quarantine Sites and an accompanying referral process for first responders, healthcare workers, and the general public;
- Participating in the development of the state's Crisis Standards of Care Plan, as well as the Mass Fatality Management Plan;
- Providing technical assistance to users in the statewide healthcare information management system to increase situational awareness and facilitate information sharing; and
- Disseminating daily information to healthcare partners to facilitate situational awareness and a common operating picture.

To learn more about the Coalition and its activities related to emergency preparedness, response and recovery visit them [online](#).



Foundation for Healthy Communities Receives Grant to Strengthen Access to Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

One of 19 Organizations Selected Nationwide

The Foundation for Healthy Communities (FHC) was recently awarded more than \$586,000 in grant funding from the Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts (FORE) to enhance access to treatment for those with an opioid use disorder (OUD) in an inpatient hospital setting. The grant will help support New Hampshire hospitals in the development and implementation of strategies to care for patients with an OUD in the acute care setting, and as evidence-based solutions to the crisis, will be designed to be adopted and sustained as best practices.

A private, national organization focused on contributing sustainable and scalable solutions to the opioid crisis, FORE awarded \$10.1 million in grants to 19 organizations across the country, supporting projects that address access to opioid use disorder treatment and services in urban, rural, minority, tribal, and low-income communities. Recognizing the urgency of the crisis, FORE wanted to inspire and accelerate action toward ending the overdose epidemic by convening and supporting stakeholders advancing patient-centered, evidence-based solutions to opioid use disorder and overdose.

“We’re extremely honored to have been selected by FORE to be a part of this program and among such distinguished colleagues who are working to address the opioid crisis,” stated FHC Executive Director Peter Ames. “This award is a testament to our current work in

implementing solutions to the opioid crisis, and we're excited to strengthen those efforts with our hospital partners in the inpatient setting."

The FORE grant will address existing gaps in addiction treatment in New Hampshire for hospital inpatient populations, while engaging this vulnerable population in identifying and testing solution strategies. The project will be implemented through the Experience Based Co-Design (EBCD) model, an approach that includes participation from all stakeholders, including patients, and will provide innovative methods and strategies to enhance access to lifesaving treatment for OUD patients.

A survey conducted by the Foundation for Healthy Communities in August 2019 revealed that only 9 of the 26 acute care hospitals in the state are currently providing OUD medications for addiction treatment in the inpatient setting. Anecdotal reports from hospitals in NH suggest that OUD patients in inpatient settings are more likely to leave the hospital against medical advice, inappropriately receive pain medications, experience disruptions in their established care, or whose recovery from their illness / injury was impaired by an unidentified or unmanaged OUD.

For more information on the grant project, please contact [Tanya Lord](#), Director of Patient & Family Engagement, at the Foundation for Healthy Communities.



Foundation *for* Opioid Response Efforts

Substance Use Treatment Continues in the Midst of COVID-19 Pandemic



Learn more about
our Substance Use
Disorder Treatment
Project

While the nation and world respond to COVID 19, the opioid epidemic continues to claim thousands of lives in our country and hundreds of lives in New Hampshire every year. The Foundation for Healthy Communities is completing the fourth year of a project to reverse these numbers and to save many lives. With funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, the Foundation has worked with 14 hospitals on 21 separate projects to identify patients with opioid use disorder and to provide the appropriate treatment, especially Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT). The focus of the grant has been on hospital emergency departments and affiliated primary care practices.

The results have been impressive. More than 147 medical providers have been credentialed in the administration of medications to treat opioid use disorder. Hundreds of health care workers have received training in erasing stigma, harm reduction strategies, and many other topics related to substance use disorder. Most importantly, over 3,500 patients had received treatment. Substance use disorder is a chronic and treatable disease of the brain and a large majority of people who receive treatment experience significant improvement. The Foundation is proud to be a partner with our health care providers in making a difference for so many in our state.

Youth Photovoice Highlights Challenges in Accessing Recreation Opportunities

The Foundation for Healthy Communities and HEAL NH's Active Recreation Workgroup recently completed a 4-year **Youth Photovoice/UMap Project** as part of its mission to promote active recreation access in NH communities. While the HEAL NH Initiative ended in 2017, the workgroup felt it was important to continue the Photovoice/UMap Project to create a better understanding of the challenges youth and families face when accessing active recreation opportunities and to promote solutions from the youth themselves. The goals of the project included:

- Empower youth by teaching them skills to use their voices for community change.
- Provide a platform for youth to use their voice to advocate for improved, safer access to active recreation opportunities in their communities.
- Youth will identify at least 2 signature projects per community to improve active recreation access.

Youth from Berlin, Franklin, Haverhill, Manchester and Nashua participated in the project over the 4-year period, with community champions in each of the communities who were trained to lead the project with area youth.

Participating youth toured their communities and took photographs to “tell their story,” choosing those that were most meaningful to them and captioning them in their own words. Not only did youth create exhibits with their work that were on display throughout their communities, but many of them also presented their recommendations to town or city officials.

Photographs, maps and reports from the Photovoice/UMap project in each community can be accessed via our [online Storymap platform](#).



“I took this picture because the sidewalk ends here. Then I have to go in the street because I don’t want to go into people’s yards. When I go in the street, it is dangerous because the roads are narrow and cars drive fast.”

W.D., 12 yrs. old

“The Mayor expressed his wish for the students to narrow down their concerns to their top 3, so the City could act on them and not allow the fine work these students did go unacted upon.”

~Naomi Levesque,
Assistant Program
Director, Family Resource
Center, Berlin, NH

Upcoming Events



REVENUE INTEGRITY TRAINING FOR CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS

Due to COVID-19, the Foundation for Healthy Communities has rescheduled the **Revenue Integrity and Chargemaster Boot Camp for Critical Access Hospitals** to a virtual webinar series. Intended for Critical Access Hospital Revenue Cycle professionals, this extensive virtual series will consist of 16 modules conducted in 3 hour segments beginning July 13th and concluding July 24th.

Registration fees are covered by the *Small Hospital Improvement Program* grant.

Register by June 22nd - learn more today!

STAY CONNECTED

